A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, November 15. 1707.

IN diſcourſing of our Loſſes and Diſaſters in my laſt Paper, I told you of a new Enemy riſen up againſt us; but before I enter too far into it, give me Leave a little to paraphraſe upon the thing; I told you, that our *High-Flying* Gentlemen falling into a Fit of Religion, begin to cant as well as their Neighbours, and tell us, that Heaven fights againſt us, that GOD has forſaken us, that he viſibly declares War with us, blaſts all our Enterprizes, and ſucceeds all our Enemies, and the like— And did not two things taint their Doctrine with the viſible Marks of a falſe Prophecy, I ſhould let them go on, if they pleas'd; but it is apparent to me, the Deluſion is of the Devil, and to ſerve his Intereſt.

1. Becauſe the Reaſons, they aſſign, are ſuch as we know are inconſiſtent with the Nature of GOD's Providence, and contrary to the univerſal Courſe of his Judgments in the World—*Viz.* That it is for our carrying on an unjuſt War, and our diſpoſeſſing unjuſtly the right Line, as they call it, of our Kings—Both which being put into true, native, undiſſembled *Engliſh*, ought to be call'd fighting againſt Idolatry and Oppreſſion in the World, and depoſing Tyranny at Home; which are things ſo plainly agreeable to the uſual Method of Providence in the Government of the World, and ſo viſibly has the Hand of that Providence acted and appear'd in all the Steps of it, that to ſay theſe are the Reaſons of GOD's ſeeming to lay his Hand upon us, is to ſay, he acts againſt himſelf, and is pulling down his own Kingdom in the World, which would be horrid Blaſphemy to ſuggeſt.

2. Becauſe theſe Gentlemen ſay this from a wicked Principle, and preach to us of the Judgment of GOD, not in order to make us, like Chriſtians, apply to Heaven

ven by Repentance and Humiliation, like *Nineveh*, but that we might deſpair, and run into all Manner of Diſtractions, in order to be ruin'd and compleatly deſtroy'd.

But after all, it is in it ſelf a uſeful Conſideration, that it has not pleas'd GOD to give us this Year the Succeſs we have had; He has not ſeem'd to go out with our Armies, and appear with our Navies, as he has formerly done; He has not bleſs'd us in our going out and in our coming in, our Basket and our Store, meaning our Commerce, as he has formerly done—And what have we to learn from this? Indeed too many things for me to teach you, and perhaps what you will diſdain to hear from ſo mean a Hand, nor do I doubt of the ſame Return, a like deſpicable Teacher met with in the Goſpel, *Thou waſt altogether born in Sin, and doſt thou teach us?* 9. *John* 34. No, Gentlemen, I will not teach you at all, I will but put you in Mind, what you have been taught already——And I'll ſend you to two School-maſters for your Teaching, the Scripture, and the King of *France*.

Innumerable Texts correct us from the infallible Inſtructor, and tell us, that we neither behave in our Proſperity or in our Adverſity, like a People that expected their Succeſs from Heaven; in Proſperity how exalted, in Adverſity how peeviſh!—With Succeſs how puffed up, how ſacrifizing to our Sword and our Bow, how idolizing Inſtruments, and forgetting our Maker!

In our Loſſes and perplexing Difficulties, how are our Eyes fix'd upon the Miſcarriage of Inſtruments, as if the whole Weight of our Loſſes depended upon the Villany of Traytors! —Have you Traytors, have you Spyes, have you corrupted Agents among you? Has *French* Money touch'd the Hands, and tainted the Hearts of any of our great Ones; bring them out with the Prieſts of *Baal*, and let them be hew'd in pieces before the Lord, make a Sacrifice to the People of the wicked Inſtruments, But pray, Gentlemen, do not reſt there. Can Traytors ſell you, can Fools undo you, can falſe Friends betray you, can Cowards diſhearten you, and the permitting Judgment of Heaven not be concern'd in it? Can this Evil be in the City, and the Lord has not done it? Decieve your ſelves as you pleaſe, and rail at Traytors, and among them, call your beſt Friends ſo, as you never fail to do, but be aſſur'd this thing is of GOD—And if you won't ſee it, you muſt be blind, and go on till you come to the Pit; GOD grant you may open your Eyes, before you fall in.

I have often obſerv'd, that *Adam* and *Eve*, two People I ſuppoſe, thoſe few of you that trouble your Heads about the *Bible* may have heard of, were a very loving agreeable Couple, and if you will believe Mr. *Milton*, had the Perfection of Conjugal Love towards one another— But as ſoon as ever they ſinn'd, they fell out; and juſt ſo it is among us, as ſoon as ever we fall into Miſtakes, and Miſchiefs follow as naturally, they will immediately fall together by the Ears, and fly one at another; this is long of you Knave, and this of you Knave—But who looks up, and ſays, this is long of all of us?

As to Miſmanagements of perſons and Inſtruments, GOD forbid, I ſhould plead for the leaſt Offender; nay, if a Man had ſerv'd us 19 Times, and ſold us the 20th, *according to our old* Engliſh *Mode of Friendſhip*, I am in this Caſe for forgetting the 19 good Turns, and let him be hang'd for miſſing the laſt One—*Not that I juſtifie the Practice neither*, the Meaning is plain; but let us come to Particulars according to the Text, *in the Time of Adverſity conſider*, and let me lead you by the Hand to ſome Caſes, in which the viſible Hand of GOD's Providence has been againſt us, in which the moſt quarrelſome, froward Temper in the World cannot ſay, this or that Miſcarriage has been the Occaſion of it. or this or that great Man has not done his Duty; but mere abſtracted Providence has done the Work, and told you, however he has aſſiſted us in other Caſes, that for all this his Anger is not turned away, but his Hand is ſtretched out ſtill; and if you will not ſee it, you muſt let it alone.

I could go farther back with you, but I'll begin at the great Storm, the like of which has not been paralell'd in theſe Parts of the World; and it would be endleſs to repeat the Circumſtance of it, its Violence, its Duration, the Ruin it brought upon us by Land, and particularly by Sea, and more particularly upon the Navy; a Particular of which has been printed at large.

I might put the *Barbadoes* Merchants in mind of their Succeſs in three Years together; once with the Hurricane there, the ſecond Year by the Enemies, coming home, being ſeparated by bad Weather from their Convoys, and the third Year by a dreadful Storm upon them in the *Sound* at *Plymouth*. In all theſe they can talk of no Miſmanagement, other than what had provoked Heaven to take their Puniſhment into his own Hand.

But I come nearer the preſent Day of our Complaint— And firſt, pray, Gentlemen, who can you accuſe for locking you up four Months the laſt Year, when your Army was ſhip'd, and putting a[*Nolumus* or Prohibition from Heaven upon our purpoſed Deſcent into *France*— I never heard, any had the Face to reproach the Admiral, for not making the Wind blow, or to ſay, our Deſign was betray'd to the *French* King, and he had Wind bound us, till the Seaſon was over; I have ſeen no Miſmanagement charged upon our Navy-Office neither, for not directing ſuch Ships to be built, as might be fit for ſuch Expeditions, and ſail without or againſt the Wind, and go to Sea, whether GOD Almighty would or no— All our Murmurs were ſilenc'd on this Head, and no Man can call it any thing but *Digitus Dei*.

Again, come we to *Flanders*, who will you charge it upon? That the continual Rains of the wetteſt Summer, that has been for theſe 20 Years, protected the Enemy from your Attacks, made it impoſſible for us to follow them, or to form our Troops for a Battle, when Opportunities ſeem'd otherwiſe to offer themſelves: Let the Accuſers of their Brethren ſtand forth now, and let us ſee them impeach the Duke of *Marlborough*, that he did not like his Brother General, the brave *Joſhua*, command the Clouds to hold up, or the Rain not to deſcend, while the Slaughter of thoſe *French Amorites* was over! And was it the *French* General that brought theſe Rains down for their Protection, to make the Country impracticable, and the Rivers unpaſſable; where will our continual Murmurers fix their clamorous Argument, and who will they challenge for this?

Again, Gentlemen, who drove the *Dutch* and *Hamborough* Fleet from the *Texel* into the Mouths of the *French*, and ſtranded them upon their Enemies Shoar? Who made them ſeek to be taken into *Newport*, *Dunkirk* and *Calais*, for Fear of Death by the Tempeſt? This was no Miſmanagement I am ſure, nor were any of the Stateſmen among the *Dutch* anſwerable for this Diſaſter.

What can be ſaid for the *Ruſſia* Fleet, would any Body imagine they ſhould not be ſafe, when 16 Men of War had ſeen them ſafe to the *North Cape*, or would you not have call'd it Nonſence to have ſent a Squadron of *Engliſh* Men of War to *Archangel*? If Enemies lie where no Enemies ever lay before, and where no Men could have expected them, Will any Man call this Miſmanagement, or blame Conduct for it?

To go on, we are now come to the Fleet from the *Streights*; who ſplit our Admiral upon the Rocks, and who drove the Fleet out of their Knowledge? What Fate hurried a thouſand brave Fellows to their laſt Moment, and at one Shock daſh'd them into Eternity? All theſe things are out of the Reach of Miſmanagement.

Shall we come on Shore, and enquire, who blaſted the Fruits of the Earth, and ruin'd your Summer Corn? Who burnt up the Graſs, and gave you a Dearth of Food for the Cattle, the Effects of which is felt in the Countries, and in your Purſes in the City, tho' ſurfeited with Plenty, you are inſenſible of the Hand? Is it not he that can curſe your Bleſſings, and when he pleaſes, ſend Leanneſs into your Bones?

Thus far now I am very ſure, the Hand of Providence has been ſingly employ'd upon us, and the Agency of Man is perfectly unconcern'd; no Room is left here for your Murmurs and Clamours, nor can you blame any Body, you dare mention here. Where are you then, you Sons of Diſcontent, that are always crying out, *Treaſon*, *Treaſon*; banning and railing at Inſtruments, and have too much Paſſion employ'd in your Reſentment, to give you Time to look up to that Inviſible Hand that afflicts you, and much leſs to the Cauſes for which he does it?

If your Miſcarriages are from Man, let Man be call'd to an Account for them, and let Juſtice be ſeen unbiaſs'd and unbounded, *Curat Lex*; but have a Care, Gentlemen, of doing by your Loſſes, as you do by your

your Victories, put them all to the Account of Man: It has not been the Arm of Fleſh that has puniſhed you any more than it was that which has proſper'd you, and perhaps you are led ſo plainly to it in the firſt, becauſe you would not ſee it in the laſt—I ſhall ſend you to *France* for Inſtruction in this Affair in my next.

MISCELLANEA.

WHile we are generally mourning and mortify'd at the unhappy Loſs of Sir *Cloudſly Shovell*, I find, generally ſpeaking, the Diſcourſe always ends in this publick Queſtion; Well, he is gone, and it is a very ſad Piece of News, but who will be our new Admiral, who will ſucceed him? And then the *Coffee-Houſe* Politicians ſpend their Extraordinaries, and read Lectures upon the ſeveral Competitors, and divided they are immediately like the reſt of the World, and every Man has his Party to vote for him, according to the little Portion he has of Politick Knowledge; and the Queſtion has been ſo often put to me, that I ſee no better Place to anſwer it than here. —And my Anſwer will be not ſo much who ſhall be the Man, as who every Body deſires to have in it.

I know, Firſt, it ſhall be who her Majeſty pleaſes; and I do not ſay that to inform any Body, but to hint to you, that the Wiſdom of Her Majeſty's Choice appear'd ſo viſibly in the Choice of Sir *Cloudſly*, that we have a great Deal of Reaſon to believe, it ſhall be well directed now.

Two things ſeem to me to be the general Deſire of all good Men: Firſt, that the Man choſen be a Man of true Naval Experience and try'd Conduct— It has been an old Complaint againſt our Naval Management, and more ſo of old than lately, of upſtart, ignorant and inſufficient Fellows, being truſted with our Men of War— Whoſe Want of Experience made them contemptible, even to the very fore maſt Men, and whoſe Inſolence and Pride, *the conſtant Accompliſhments of a Novice*, made them intolerable,

Sir *Cloudſly* had this Part to every Man's Satisfaction; he was born for the Sea, bred upon it, and dy'd in it; he was brave, young, and ſedate old; he was ancient in Experience, and untainted in the Reputation of his Conduct. I make no Compariſons, nor ſhall I diminiſh the Characters of any that may ſucceed him—But I dare ſay, let him be who he will, if he purſues his Steps, he never leſſens his Reputation.

I confeſs, 'tis not a ſmall Matter to follow ſuch a General, and he that ſucceeds Sir *Cloudſly*, has ſomething more to cheque his Vanity, than another Man would have. Has the next Admiral his Courage, his Honeſty, his Courteſie, his Experience, his Fidelity to the QUEEN, and his Senſe of *Britain*'s Intereſt? I care not one Farthing, what his Name is, or whether he has a Name, or no.

The ſecond Thing, I ſay is deſir'd, is, Oh that it may be a ſpeedy Choice; that Parties, Cabals, and Vying of Intereſts for this or that, may not at this Juncture aſſiſt that wicked, degenerate, wretched Race, who flatter themſelves with ſubverting us at laſt, by forming us into ſeparate Intereſts and emulating Parties— The Proſpect of their Deſign, and too much of their Succeſs moves me to be very earneſt in this Matter—A ſuddain quick Nomination would put an End to the Ambition, and puſhing of the Competitors one againſt another, muſtering Friends, forming their Intereſts, which have been too often the Beginnings of Faction, Pique and Prejudices, which have been ſoon created, but long and hard in diſperſing again; which Method of acting in Squadrons againſt one another, has always been fatal to the publick Good.

A good Admiral then, and ſoon nam'd, is the Sum of the Matter; Heaven guide Her Majeſty to the Man—And let our Naval Management be rally'd and reproached as much as they pleaſe, and moſt by thoſe that underſtand it leaſt—We have found our Captains and Sea-Officers have diſcharg'd their Part better within theſe three Years paſt, than for ten Years before.